

Alabama coach Kalen DeBoer to make \$10.875 million per year

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DeBoer on McAfee: I couldn't pass up Alabama job (1:40)

Chris Low, ESPN Senior Writer Mar 18, 2024, 07:49 PM ET

First-year [Alabama](#) coach Kalen DeBoer will make an average of \$10.875 million per year, ranking him in the top five nationally among the highest-paid coaches in college football.

His eight-year contract was approved Monday by the University of Alabama System Board of Trustees, and DeBoer will make \$10 million in the first year of his deal that will run through Dec. 31, 2031. His compensation will increase \$250,000 per year and grow to \$11.75 million in the final year of the deal.

DeBoer's contract is 90 percent guaranteed if he were to be fired without cause, and there is no mitigation. His buyout if he were to leave Alabama before his contract is up is \$5 million in 2024, \$4 million in 2025, \$3 million in 2026 and nothing from 2027-31.

DeBoer's average salary ranks fourth among all college football head coaches, industry sources told ESPN. [Clemson](#)'s Dabo Swinney is at the top with an average annual salary of \$11.5 million. [Georgia](#)'s Kirby Smart and [USC](#)'s Lincoln Riley are also over the \$11 million figure annually. DeBoer is fourth (\$10.875 million) followed by [Texas](#)' Steve Sarkisian (\$10.64 million) and [Florida State](#)'s Mike Norvell (\$10.52 million).



Sarkisian and Norvell both agreed to new deals taking them over the \$10 million mark in January about the time of DeBoer's hiring. DeBoer made \$4.2 million last season at [Washington](#) in leading the Huskies to the national championship game. Washington athletic director Troy Dannen said he offered DeBoer \$9.4 million after the Sugar Bowl, but DeBoer rejected that offer to become Alabama's coach and replace Nick Saban.

Saban, who retired on Jan. 10 after winning six national championships in 17 seasons at Alabama, was scheduled to make \$11.5 million in 2024.

In other salary news for Alabama assistant coaches, defensive coordinator Kane Wommack will make \$1.55 million in 2024, offensive coordinator Nick Sheridan \$1.35 million, co-offensive coordinator/receivers coach JaMarcus Shephard \$1.1 million, associate head coach/defensive line coach Freddie Roach \$1 million, strength coach David Ballou \$950,000, assistant head coach/running backs coach Robert Gillespie \$850,000, co-defensive coordinator/defensive backs coach Maurice Linguist \$875,000, offensive line coach Chris Kapilovic \$875,000, outside linebackers coach Christian Robinson \$650,000, co-defensive coordinator/defensive backs coach Colin Hitschler \$625,000, tight ends coach Bryan Ellis \$550,000, general manager Courtney Morgan \$500,000 and special teams coordinator Jay Nunez \$250,000.

Nebraska coach Matt Rhule surprised AD Trev Alberts left

Associated Press

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LINCOLN, Neb. -- Coach Matt Rhule spent the first 10 minutes of his pre-spring football practice news conference Monday giving a pep talk to a Nebraska fan base reeling from last week's surprise departure of athletic director Trev Alberts.

Rhule has been at the school only 16 months, watching university president Ted Carter leave for the same position at Ohio State and Alberts take off for the AD job at Texas A&M.

Rhule is entering his second year of an eight-year, \$74 million contract after going 5-7 in his first season. He said he was surprised and disappointed the two men who brought him to Nebraska are gone so soon.

But Rhule delivered an upbeat monologue invoking Hall of Fame football coaches Bob Devaney and Tom Osborne and sprinkling in names of top players on the men's and women's basketball teams headed to the NCAA Tournament.

"I'm here, and I'm all in, and Julie's all in," Rhule said, referring to his wife. "I loved Ted Carter and I loved Trev and I came because of them. But I came to be at the University of Nebraska, and I've loved the people I've met, and we're not going anywhere unless you guys kick us out."

Nebraska will be hiring its fourth athletic director since 2013, and the search is being led by an interim president, Chris Kabourek, while executive associate AD for academics Dennis Leblanc leads the department in an interim role.

Alberts, an All-America football player for the Cornhuskers in the early 1990s and athletic director for less than three years, has not given specific reasons for leaving. The contract non-disparagement clause was activated when he resigned. Gov. Jim Pillen, in a statement last week, blamed university regents for moving to slowly in its search for a new president. Alberts had previously expressed frustration that the process wasn't moving more quickly.

Rhule said Alberts was "forthright" during their phone call last week and, as for Alberts' reasons, "that's his story to tell."

"I have no complaints about how he handled it, at least with me," Rhule said.

The Cornhuskers have been off the national radar in football since their 1990s heyday, which has taken a toll on the psyche of a state where the program receives year-round attention. Rhule said fans should remember Nebraska has had a strong reputation across college athletics.

He noted the athletic department is self-supporting financially and has been a trailblazer in academic support, strength training and nutrition and more recently in the name, image and likeness space.

"We have to be unabashed in our desire to be the best," Rhule said. "We cannot worry about optics. We cannot worry about what people say. The way you win in college athletics today is you invest. I can't think of a state that knows that better than this amazing state -- whether it's all the amazing financial institutions, the people in Omaha, Warren Buffett and Berkshire Hathaway. All the agriculture across our state -- you won't get a harvest unless you sow seed and water it."

"Whether it's salaries, facilities, upgrades, whatever it is. ... We need to return to the days when everybody across the country is coming to the University of Nebraska to see how things are being done."